

50 Years on:



THE COUP THAT KEPT AUSTRALIA UNDER U.S. CONTROL

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Introduction

November 11, 2025, is the 50th anniversary of the sacking of the elected Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam.

The sacking met the needs of the US imperialists and was carried out in the form of a constitutional coup by the British colonial relic, the Governor-General.

The sacking not only kept immediate US interests – concealment of CIA activity and protection of Pine Gap – safe, but ensured that future Labor Prime Ministers had learned the lesson that the US-Australia Alliance was to be championed at all costs.

The sacking thus ensured that long-term US interests – its investments in Australia and reaping of profits from the surplus value created by Australian workers, and defence

against its decline in the face of future rivalry from an expansionist, capitalist China – would be the basis of Labor government foreign policy.

The great need for Australian anti-imperialist independence underlies Australian people's opposition to the AUKUS arrangements and to US pressure to make Australia a military colony prepared to align itself with whatever unjust wars it seeks to draw Australia into.

In this small publication, we reprint several articles on Whitlam and then ACTU leader, and later Prime Minister, Bob Hawke which we believe have stood the test of time.

There is also a preliminary analysis of Labor in office since Whitlam.

It was time.

Central Committee October 27, 2025

After 23 years of stultifying, dull, conservative government, it was time, in December 1972.

The two decades that preceded the election of the Whitlam government began with Menzies who insisted on selling pig iron to Japan for its war on China in 1938. Menzies professed admiration for Hitler's Nazi Germany, tried to ban the Australian Communist Party in 1951-52, and proudly declared that he was "British to my bootheels". The period ended with other Liberal PMs declaring that they would go "All the way with LBJ".

The only change during that era was the swapping of subservience to British imperialism to subservience to US imperialism.

History is not about so-called great individuals. People's mass movements, not individuals, drive change.

It was time for a change, and Whitlam delivered that change. He was swept into parliament in 1972 riding on massive waves of people's struggles that rose in the preceding 6 years: against the Vietnam War, conscription and US imperialism, against the anti-worker and anti-union penal powers and the Clarrie O'Shea militant working class struggle, against South African Apartheid, against the dominance of US and UK culture, for land rights, for women's liberation and many socially progressive reforms demanded by the people. Whitlam was a genuinely reformist leader, supportive of the US-Australia Alliance, but prepared to disagree with certain of its assumptions.

Whitlam established Medibank, created an Office for Women, introduced the Racial Discrimination Act, the Australian Legal Aid Office, and free university education.

One of his first acts as Prime Minister was to end conscription for the US war of aggression against Vietnam, followed by the withdrawal of all Australian troops from Vietnam. He angered Nixon by publicly condemning the US bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong. He

established diplomatic and trade relations with China, and also with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (but refused entry to a PLO delegation). He cancelled "God Save the Queen" as Australia's national anthem and replaced the British system of knighthoods with an Australian Honours System.

He encouraged a national bourgeois struggle to gain a greater share of the profits available from Australia's rich resource industries and expand local opportunities against the wave of American, Japanese and British imperialists' takeover of Australian economic development. Local capitalists who stood in conflict with foreign imperialists strongly pursued their own interests across a wide range of activity, funding films, newspapers, political parties, organisations, and the like. The election of the Whitlam government saw their struggle stepped up to improve their position as capitalists in Australia, against foreign imperialists, particularly US imperialists.

A type of "economic nationalism" was pursued by his Minister for Minerals and Energy, Rex Connor, whose policies were described as "buying back the farm". Connor sought to develop an Australian government-controlled mining and energy sector, not one controlled by multinational mining companies. Among his plans were a national energy grid and a gas pipe-line across Australia from the North West Shelf gas fields to the cities of the south-east. To finance his proposals, he sought loans in Middle Eastern petrodollars. Going outside the accepted debt markets in the US and the UK was anathema to US financial interests and shady manoeuvres were resorted to against Connor which led to his removal from Cabinet.

Coinciding with the controversies over the "loans affair" was a determination by Whitlam to reveal the identities and activities of CIA agents in Australia, and to threaten to close the US spy base at Pine Gap.

The US would not allow this. It had installed Marshall Green as its Ambassador to Australia on June 8, 1973. He was notorious for having

fed the names of suspected Indonesian Communists to the butchers of the Suharto regime which ultimately killed up to a million of Indonesia's finest sons and daughters.

We immediately warned that the US was preparing for a coup against the Whitlam government.

The CIA, the Governor General and the ACTU leader

THE CIA IN AUSTRALIA

Ambassador Green Plots A Military Putsch

U.S. imperialism's manoeuvres to create a suitable political climate for the imposition of open fascist rule in the United States are paralleled in countries such as Australia where the Yankee bosses have taken over.

Vanguard has warned for some time against the activities of the CIA here.

This "invisible government" of the U.S. works here all the time trying to build up a fascist, traitor network which can be used if it becomes necessary to seize the country militarily and establish the kind of military, fascist junta that rules

University of Tasmania and the man who axed Lionel Murphy for the ASIO raid, *Bulletin* reporter Peter Samuel.

"With US investments in Australia totalling more than \$4,800 million and with 33 US military

"He worked for the US navy from 1946 to '48. From 1955 he has worked in the Department of State for the CIA serving in Washington, Madras (as a Consul), Vienna and Frankfurt.

"Bar de Silva - attache US

THE AGE

A Caulfie

Undoubtedly there was a clash of ideologies in the members' enclosure at the races at Caulfield on Saturday.

Industry leader and VATE chairman Sir Rupert Clarke introduced senior Soviet official Mr. N. M. Machanov to the president of the ACTU (Mr. Bob Hawke).

According to Sir Rupert, Mr. Hawke quipped after the meeting: "How will this look for a democracy socialist to have a communist on one side and a capitalist on the other?"

Picture below, Mr. Machanov



Central to US plans was the British crown's representative in Australia, Sir John Kerr. Whitlam had appointed Kerr to this position on 11 July 1974.

Kerr had longstanding associations with organisations connected to US and British intelligence (e.g., the Australian Association for Cultural Freedom, linked to CIA-funded Congress for Cultural Freedom). He was also in close contact with the CIA-linked Asia Foundation.

It has since been revealed that CIA officials privately warned Kerr that Whitlam was endangering US-Australian security cooperation.

Christopher Boyce, a US contractor later convicted of espionage, claimed in the late 1970s that the CIA referred to Australia under Whitlam as a "security risk" and that Pine Gap was central to US strategic interests. Declassified US cables show American concern about Whitlam's attitude to the bases and to US policy. Some documents confirm that the US ambassador and intelligence agencies were reporting on Whitlam's government in detail. Former CIA officer Victor Marchetti publicly stated that the CIA considered Whitlam a threat and was worried he might close Pine Gap.

On July 31, 1975, Marshall Green was recalled to the US. It was best for US interests that he not be around when the coup took place.

VANGUARD

Point of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist)

THURSDAY, JULY 11th, 1974 PRICE 10c

OF STRUGGLE TO THE RICH PAY!

Generalise General Motors And BHP

to develop in response to the economic crisis which is rapidly deepening on an unprecedented scale; it will take twists and turns never before

of preparation for struggle; infinite flexibility, no schemes and blue-print philosophy, declaration of principle etc. will not do. Action the order of the day.

its vehicles, ruined and subordinated the public transport system for its own benefit (even being so brazen as to insist upon its own top officials sitting on public transport bodies), all in the interests of profits – not a single solitary consideration of the interests, use or benefit of the people, solely and simply General Motors' mad rush for profits. With it came U.S. imperialist-based inflation. Inflation cuts the heart out of the purchasing power of the people just as surely as does a direct wage cut. So the people cannot buy General Motors' products (or others). Motor vehicles cannot be sold, there is no profit for General Motors in producing them, so production slows down, workers are put off, suppliers of components are ruined, service station proprietors are ruined, unemployment grows. The whole elaborate edifice comes tumbling down.

The old institutions – parliament, the courts, police, including ASIO, gaols, are no longer the reliable stalwarts of days gone by. They are seriously challenged; there is widespread revolt against them. The ruling circles can no longer rule in the same, confident way of old.

Nor can the workers rely upon old institutions. The trade unions of social democracy, the form of unions in Australia under A.C.T.U. and Trades and Labor Councils, are proving and will prove quite inadequate to handle the situation. Their leaders are class collaborators who are hell-bent on nothing but solving the problems of capitalism. And those problems are insoluble.

Labor Party leaders stand on the side of capitalism. Historically in times of crisis the ALP leaders shift about – some go to the right, some

CHAOS PLAIN TO SEE

General Motors restricts production to the left. That process can be seen

Kick Green Out - But Also U.S. Imperialism

The controversy about Marshall Green, U.S. Ambassador to Australia, should not be allowed to centre merely on Marshall Green. There is no question at all but that he is indeed a hatchet man for U.S. imperialism.

The central fact is that U.S. imperialism does intrigue in the internal affairs of its dependencies and semi-dependencies as is Australia. This is the very role and purpose of imperialism.

If an imperialist country has vast interests in a country like Australia, as it has, and important military naval and air installations, then it stands to reason that that imperialist country does interfere in such a semi-dependent country. This has occurred in Australia from the first moment of U.S. investment in Australia. It has continued to occur increasingly as U.S. investment in Australia has increased. It is occurring now on a big scale. It will continue to occur until U.S. imperialism has been expelled from Australia, and Australia has secured real people's democratic, anti-imperialist independence.

The personality of the U.S. Ambassador in a given country, in one sense, is a secondary matter because, whoever it is, he will execute U.S. imperialist interference in that country. Nonetheless it does have a certain importance. If the Ambassador concerned has had "successful" experience in organising coups in other countries obviously that experience is going to be useful in Australia. Green has had such experience in Indonesia and South Korea.

It would be naive indeed to believe that Green has not been up to similar skulduggery in Australia. If he hasn't then he is not doing the job for U.S. imperialism and it ought to sack him. U.S. imperialism undoubtedly has "contingent" plans openly to take over Australia.

U.S. imperialism has not "spectacularly" appeared to interfere in Australia's internal affairs or, at least, not as spectacularly as in cases like Chile. But everyone knows of its blatant public interference in many countries. All that that public interference was, was the continuation of much undercover and not so public interference.

In Australia, for example, General Motors is a state within Australia. If Green were not looking after its interests he would get the sack.

There is another feature on the present situation. In the struggle between U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism for world domination Australia occupies an increasingly important position. It is the scene of comparatively large U.S. investment and military installations, it is on the shores of both the Indian and Pacific Oceans (bones of contention between the superpowers) and on the other hand is the subject of increasing Soviet "interest". Hence U.S. imperialist domination of Australia and interference in her internal affairs assumes ever greater importance. It is a matter of vital importance to Australians to struggle against the two superpowers.

Nor should this matter be allowed to become simply the plaything of Labor parliamentarians. It is a matter of mass concern. Many times over the last several years Vanguard has drawn a lot of attention to it including the specific person and activities of Marshall Green. Senator Brown also did a

Kerr was an unstable individual and had to be reassured by the Queen's private secretary Sir Martin Charteris that he had the constitutional power to dismiss Whitlam, and that if he exercised it, the Queen would not intervene against him. He knew that Prince Phillip had called Whitlam "a socialist arsehole", and he had discussed his anxieties about Whitlam sacking him with Prince Charles.

The current King of Australia told him, after Whitlam's dismissal that "what you did last

year was right and the courageous thing to do".

Whitlam's sacking, and his acceptance of it, indicates the failure of Australian capitalists to lead the country to freedom from the strangling hold of foreign imperialists.

Whitlam took steps in that direction, but as a parliamentary social-democrat, he had no concept of calling on his popular electoral base amongst working Australians into step

alongside him.

When Whitlam government's sacking was announced, tens of thousands of angry working people immediately walked off their jobs, schools, universities and homes across the country. They gathered in public places, outside state and federal parliamentary offices demanding reinstatement of the Whitlam government and sacking the Governor-General. Workers and students were threatening strikes until their elected, popular government was reinstated.

In stepped Bob Hawke, the ACTU President at that time, and a close ally of the USA with links to CIA, directing workers and students back to work, schools, universities and homes, and to save their anger for the next parliamentary elections. (Hawke's trade mark hosing down and redirecting mass struggle into the confines of parliamentarism and restraints of social democracy.)

The wave of working class struggle of the late 60s and early 1970s imposed the interests of workers: militant union led and organised workers defied anti-strike and anti-worker laws and won higher pay, improvement in conditions, equal pay for equal work in many industries. They defied anti-worker laws and took industrial action across workplaces in solidarity with each other and with workers across the globe. Workers went on strike against conscription and Australia's involvement in US invasion, and aligned themselves with students and middle classes in progressive struggle. A number of militant unions were led by our party members.

These and many other victories weakened the Australian position of foreign monopoly capitalists, while the US imperialists were under financial assault from British imperialists allied to Middle East Oil fiefdoms internationally and suffering serious crises of overproduction while losing its military standing in Vietnam.

Having felt the power of the working class and allies in action, the national capitalists and local collaborating capitalists worked hard to settle the struggle and organisation of the working class and others down through widespread concessions to people's well-

being by the Whitlam government - Medicare, education reforms, huge public housing schemes, limited land rights, funding social and arts programs and much more.

Their attack on imperialism was more than balanced by their attack on the working class and some middle sections. As the international inflation crisis hit in 1974 the Whitlam government brought in wage fixation, attacked the right to strike and cut social program funding in an austerity budget to restore commercial profits rather than support people's well-being and living standards. The ALP took the stand of local capital against the workers and middle sections.

It had been time, but the times were changing. Bourgeois anti-imperialist revolt, led by local capitalists and middle sections closing out working class leadership had found its limits. It failed to free the country from the stranglehold of foreign imperialists.

Today's Labor leaders allow few limits to their service of US imperialism. The commanding heights of our economy are under US domination, our military is a wing of the US war machine as Pine Gap and other US military bases expand their genocidal roles. AUKUS and Force Posture Agreement lock Australia into the US military, its war machine and the military industrial complex.

Albanese even proclaims Australia's gift of rare earths and critical minerals to the US War Department a victory for Australia. Instead of buying – or demanding – the farm back, he's selling it. The people are facing US cultural bombardment. Dire poverty rises amid obscene wealth.

Only in national anti-imperialist revolution of all patriotic classes led by the mighty working class can Australia gain its liberty, free of the strangling hold of US and other foreign corporate monopolists and their imperialist states, nationalise the corporate monopolies at the heart of these chains of exploitation, oppression and national subjugation and empower the working class.

Whitlam: The Power and the Passion reviewed

Vanguard July 2013 p. 4
Nick G.



ABC TV's recent two-part series *Whitlam: The Power and the Passion* was a welcome reopening of discussion about a major event in Australian political life.

However, it missed the opportunity to fundamentally analyse the role of US imperialism in orchestrating what was in reality not a simple "dismissal" but a semi-fascist coup.

Neither did it analyse - and nor could we expect it to have analysed - the role of social democracy in confining the working class to capitalism.

Tentative expressions of independence

Coming after a long period of pro-British and pro-US servility by conservative governments, and in the wake of widespread opposition to the US imperialist war of aggression against Vietnam and to conscription, Whitlam appeared almost visionary in his decision to withdraw Australian troops and end conscription, recognise the People's Republic of China, abolish the death penalty, abolish university fees, establish legal aid and

Medibank. There were tentative expressions of a more independent Australian outlook, including replacing "God Save the Queen" as national anthem and creating a national honours list in the place of the imperial system.

As if this were not enough, Whitlam and his Minerals and Energy Minister Rex O'Connor instigated a move to "buy back the farm", focussing on the largely foreign-owned mining industry. This not only challenged multinational domination of the Australian economy but induced the government to seek finance from the Middle East rather than from the imperialist centres of finance capital: New York, London and Tokyo.

US imperialism took umbrage at this insubordination and in 1973 Nixon appointed career coup-master Marshall Green as Ambassador to Australia. Green had been in charge of the US Embassy in South Korea at the time of the 1961 coup d'état that brought Major-General Park Chung Hee to power (father of the current South Korean president Park Geun-hye). He was later appointed US Ambassador to Indonesia in time to oversee the toppling of the anti-imperialist Sukarno government and the murder of half a million communists.

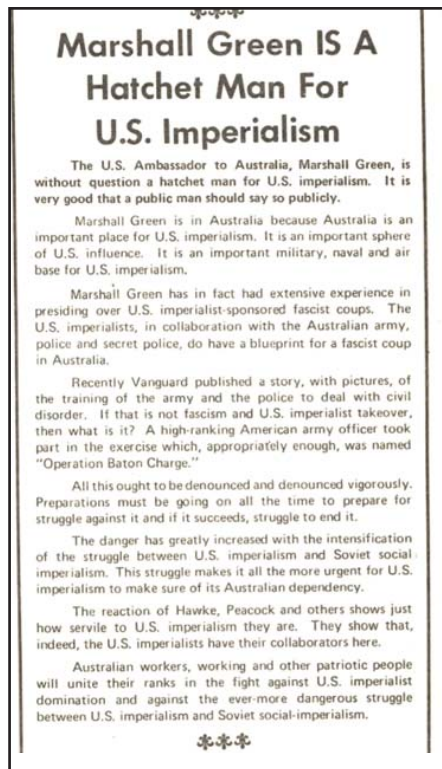
Narratives of the Whitlam dismissal do not, as a rule, examine the implications of Whitlam's irritation of the US overlords, concentrating instead on immediate players in the saga such as Whitlam, Cairns, Fraser and Kerr.

The ABC TV series is no exception. A thorough exposure of the role US imperialism played in the constitutional coup would not suit the ruling class although it is very much sensed and understood by the advanced sections of the working class.

Failure to rely on the people

The anti-Whitlam coup developed as an Opposition move to block Supply in the Senate.

This was scripted in such a way as to require



the Governor-General to withdraw Whitlam's commission to form government.

Whitlam was ultimately complicit in his own sacking. US imperialism had sent Marshall Green with a hangman's rope, but it was Whitlam who placed the noose around his own neck by his appointment of Sir John Kerr as Governor-General.

Kerr was an anti-working class arch-reactionary and associated with various US-funded institutions. He had disgraced himself in 1969 by jailing Victorian Tramways Union secretary and CPA (M-L) vice-chairperson Clarrie O'Shea over his refusal to pay fines imposed on his union. As noted by this paper on March 7, 1974, "Sir John Kerr has a very doubtful record in Australian politics. His appointment does no credit to those who appointed him".

Throughout 1973 (Green's appointment), 1974 (Kerr's appointment) and 1975 (the lead-up to the Supply crisis), our Party consistently and regularly warned the working class that a coup against Whitlam was being prepared.

Kerr performed his role and Whitlam was sacked.

Addressing a crowd of supporters outside

Parliament, Whitlam urged Australians to "maintain your rage". But he qualified that and his full statement was: "Maintain your rage and enthusiasm for the campaign for the election now to be held and until polling day." Whitlam could have gone back into Parliament House and resumed his seat as Prime Minister of Australia. This would have been consistent with his view that the Governor-General was bound by custom and practice to act on the advice of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. He did not believe the Prime Minister and Cabinet were bound to follow the orders of the Governor-General. Yet that was what he did.

For all of his flirtation with the traditions of the labour movement (calling associates "comrade", for example), Whitlam was, as he proudly proclaimed on more than one occasion, "a bourgeois".

Both as a bourgeois and as a Labor reformist, the idea of encouraging a confrontation between the people and the capitalist state machinery in the streets of the nation was anathema to him.

By refusing to stand up to Kerr by continuing to function as the elected Prime Minister, Whitlam gave no focus or purpose to the maintenance of rage other than to wait for the casting of ballots.

Treachery to the interests of the people



(above: November 12 1975 and Bob Hawke asks for a day's pay in lieu of mass struggle against US imperialism.)

This was simple treachery to the interests of the people. And it was matched the following day when the “gruff, abrasive cream-puff” of an ACTU President, Bob Hawke, rejected union calls for a nation-wide strike and urged workers instead to donate a day’s pay to an ALP re-election campaign.

The great struggles and national strikes that took place over six days following O’Shea’s jailing forced the ruling class to back down and manufacture an opportunity to have him released.

Hawke could have drawn on that legacy and brought the undeniable strength of collective working class action to force a second retreat

by the reactionaries. But his tradition was that of the Victorian and NSW Trades Hall misleaderships who had refused to back the O’Shea general strikes.

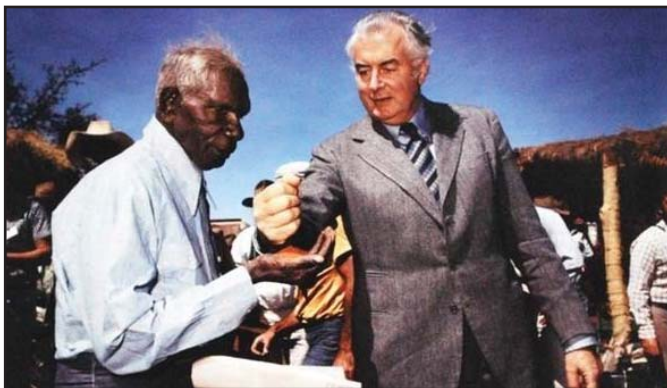
Fraser now had the incumbency, the time and the complicity of the vanquished to ensure his electoral victory over Whitlam.

The troops that had been put on stand-by to threaten blood should stain the wattle were not needed.

And we continue to this day to be bound hand and foot to US imperialism having had the one chance to really mount a mass challenge to that rule snatched from us by system loyalists in the leadership of the ALP.

Whitlam: lessons for the Australian people

Tuesday, October 21, 2014



The passing of Gough Whitlam is a time for reflection on the rich lessons to be learned from his period of government.

Those lessons embrace the nature of the Labor Party, the role of the state and imperialist interference in and control of Australia’s internal affairs.

The capitalist press keeps alive the myth that Labor is a party of the working class. It is true that it has more support from the working class than its conservative rivals, and that it has enacted reforms that benefit the people. This was particularly true of Whitlam. He abolished conscription, tertiary fees, capital

punishment, imperial honours and the White Australia Policy. He created Medibank, poured the earth of the country through the hands of its original owners and custodians, and recognised the People’s Republic of China.

Such reforms always have a dual character. On the one hand, they serve the immediate needs of the people and have a progressive character. On the other hand, they make capitalism more palatable for the working class and help prolong the life of a system that keeps the working class in its precarious and vulnerable existence.

The state is the apparatus that maintains the rule of the capitalist class. Good people often make the mistake of saying that this or that political party gets into “power” when it wins an election. This is a fundamentally mistaken view. Power is held by the ruling class. Political parties get into “office” and administer and regulate the power of the ruling class. Whitlam, for all his charisma and vision, essentially kept his reforms within the bounds of a capitalist economy. Marxist historian Humphrey McQueen tellingly noted that Whitlam’s “socialism required a larger public sector, never a reallocation of wealth.” Nevertheless, US imperialism was scared by the mere rustle of Whitlam’s leaves

in the winds. Whitlam was lifted by a genuinely popular wave of demand for real independence from imperialism. Riding that wave, his Christmas 1972 criticism of the US bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong was a shock to the Nixon administration. He supported proposals for an Indian Ocean "zone of peace" opposed by the US. Whitlam also sought to end the outsourcing of US coup attempts in Cambodia and Chile to the Australian Security Intelligence Service (ASIS), threatened not to extend the agreements covering US bases in Australia, and challenged US corporations with vague plans to "buy back the farm". In 1973, his Attorney-General Lionel Murphy raided the offices of ASIO through which the US kept the Australian people under surveillance.

Destabilisation of Whitlam's government became a priority for US imperialism. Experienced coup master Marshall Green was sent as US Ambassador in 1973. When Whitlam sought funds from the Middle East to finance nationalisation of multinational energy companies, all the tricks in the book were brought into play. A fabricated letter was used to force the sacking of Treasurer Jim Cairns. Various other forgeries were put together and leaked to the press. Millions of dollars were channelled from the CIA to the Liberal and Country Parties through the Nugan Hand Bank, causing Whitlam to label them as "subsidised by the CIA".

Marshall Green Selects Fraser To Lead Fascist Attack Against Working People

Divisions within the ruling class have thrown the Liberal Party into disarray. Struggle for leadership of the party has intensified.

Naturally we care little about who leads the party of open reaction but it is important that we take note of the divisions between the ruling groups that the leadership struggle reflects.

It is now clear that the bourgeois parliamentary system is unable to cope with the onrush of crisis. The Labor Party leadership is being rapidly exposed to the people as a party of capitalism. Many bourgeois press commentators are saying that it has become obvious that the Labor leaders are tossing overboard their

good terms with Whitlam despite the anti-U.S. outbursts of the past and the branding of General Motors as the "ugly American". Green understands that the Labor leaders must at least appear to have some fight in them.

Cairns is also acceptable to U.S. imperialism. There should be no illusions about Cairns' anti-U.S. talk

Frequent Visitor
The Nation Review (January 17) says "the guest list for his (Fraser) manorial home includes such figures as the American ambassador, Marshall Green."

Fraser's recent statement on trade unions leaves no doubt that they would be quickly declared illegal if he was in charge of the government. Attacks on trade unions are the first steps to all-out fascist terror against the people.

VANGUARD WANTS MORE CONTRIBUTORS
In this new year, Vanguard appeals to all to contribute material to it.

A feature of Vanguard has

(Above: In the first edition of our paper Vanguard, for 1975, we warned that Malcolm Fraser had been selected by Marshall Green to tighten the US screws on the Australian people)

In the end, there was no need for Marshall Green to repeat the slaughter he had visited upon the Indonesian people when he oversaw Suharto's coup against Sukarno. Whitlam had stupidly appointed Clarrie O'Shea's jailer, Sir John Kerr to the Governor-Generalship despite knowledge of Kerr's ties to various "foundations" financed and controlled by the CIA. A crisis around the Supply Bills was manufactured and on November 11, 1975, the very day when Whitlam was to inform Parliament everything he knew about the CIA and US bases in Australia, he was sacked by Kerr.

Whitlam had more than once declared proudly that he was bourgeois. Now that class membership and his underlying fear of an independent, organised working class, kicked in. He advised supporters to "maintain their rage", but remained impotent himself, meekly accepting the transition by means of a semi-fascist coup, to the caretaker Prime Ministership of Malcolm Fraser. Future Labor leader and ACTU head Bob Hawke kept the working class from a general strike.

The message was not lost on Labor. As a party of capitalism that had adopted some of the policies and practices of a social-democratic party, Labor was to refashion itself under Hawke and Keating as an ardent supporter of neo-liberalism. This corresponded with the ascendancy of finance capital over industrial capital and a change from Labor's championing of manufacturing to its embrace of deregulation and privatisation.

Rather than advancing itself as a champion of independent nation-building, Labor's former support for Australia's national development was subsumed by its fundamental support for the US-Australian "alliance", a relationship in which the demands of the stronger partner are willingly enacted by the weaker.

The parliamentary process can never buck the power of the ruling class. The Labor Party cannot be the party through which the fundamental interests of the working class are pursued.

Only the development of a revolutionary movement for anti-imperialist independence and socialism, led by the working class

through its own independent organisation, can realise the vision that the state and the imperialists conspired to drown when they deposed Whitlam.

The Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist) exists for that reason, and for that reason alone.

Building the Party of the working class is a challenge in Australian conditions, but understanding the significance of the Whitlam era encourages us to redouble our efforts to regroup, to rebuild, to resist and to rebel.

Bob Hawke: Labor Lieutenant of Capital



Saturday, May 18, 2019

Nick G.

A great deal has been written and said over the past couple of days about the former head of the ACTU and Labor Prime Minister Bob Hawke, following his death at the age of 89.

Even as the current federal election campaign draws to a close, leaders of both major parliamentary parties were fulsome in their praises. Likewise, commentators and journalists in the mass media.

Hours have been spent in the elevation of Hawke to a type of political sainthood. Focus is made time and again on those aspects of Hawke's personality and incidents from his life on the basis of which a constructed mass

popularity has been built. We know more about his larrikinism and lechery than we do about his service as a loyal labor lieutenant of capital.

So, perhaps we can be excused if we decline to go over once again his 1954 world record for drinking a yard of beer, or his poolside cavorting in skin-tight budgie smugglers at the ALP's 1975 Terrigal Conference.

Nor is it with any desire to speak ill of the dead that instead we look at his real record of service to capitalism. It is just that in a small way an attempt must be made to set Hawke's record straight.

Hawke and the Presidency of the ACTU

Hawke became President of the peak union

body the ACTU in July 1969. Some of our readers may be aware that we have just been celebrating the 50th anniversary of an event which took place two months earlier that year – the jailing and subsequent freeing of Tramways Union secretary and CPA (M-L) vice-chairperson Clarrie O'Shea. The workers of Australia had been unrestrained in their strikes and demonstrations in support of O'Shea: over a million workers went out to free Clarrie and end the hated penal powers of the Arbitration system. In the process, the tamecat ACTU leadership of Monk and Souter, who had opposed the strikes, had been thoroughly discredited.

Monk was about to retire. Souter was positioned to replace him. There was no confidence on the part of the ruling class of local and big foreign monopolies that Souter could control the workers. Bob Hawke was then a research officer with the ACTU with a responsibility for wage policy. He was young and ambitious. He made his move in March, meeting at Melbourne's Downtown Motel with US Embassy officials with whom he had cultivated a relationship. They included US labor attaches since revealed to have been working for the CIA. He explained to them what he considered to be the ineptitude of Monk and Souter, and won their backing. One of them, Eric Lindahl, conveyed the US decision to the ACTU.

The O'Shea struggle was the nail in the coffin for Monk and Souter. The US candidate was elevated to the ACTU Presidency.

Reining in the workers

By the early 1970s Hawke had reassured the ruling class that their hopes of maintaining their control and deception over the workers with a 'left' leader had been well-placed.

A Hawke template was applied to every strike and struggle: make a lot of "militant" noise then at an opportune moment rush in and settle – not win – the dispute.

Hawke, and the ACTU leaders supporting him, were able to present themselves as "great tacticians" by preventing further struggles outside of the arbitration courts. Arbitration was "fair", "just", "the best way", etc. The media loved the way Hawke went about "settling" disputes.

A case in point was the militant Ford Broadmeadows strike of May-July 1973.

The nine-week strike was a magnificent example of workers' struggle. Ford had attempted to impose a speed-up to compete with GMH. Wages were low, and the workers complained of being treated like dogs. Anger was directed at those who held back the struggle or tried to divert it into Arbitration (mainly Len Townsend of the Vehicle Builders Union and the revisionist "Communist" Laurie Carmichael of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union). The workers defied a return-to-work order – the police were called in. Townsend and Carmichael lost control. A second order to return to work was made with Justice Moore saying he would inspect the factory and arbitrate a decision. At this stage, an opportune moment given that maybe a thousand strikers had sought better employment elsewhere, Mr. Hawke broke his long silence and urged the Ford workers to return to work. With the dispute now "settled", Moore's "inspection" resulted in a pathetic wage increase, removed lateness penalties from the award and gave the workers an afternoon tea break. Much more could have been won had the workers kept control of the dispute and retained the initiative embedded in rank and file leadership.

The official trade union bodies had long ago been carefully fitted into the whole system of exploitation. As ACTU President Hawke spent a great deal of time with the employers, with Fraser and Minister for Labour Street, with the US and Japanese multinationals; he assisted Fraser in introducing so-called wage indexation which resulted in a substantial reduction of real wages. Just as he did against the penal provisions he made "militant" statements against the Industrial Relations Bureau and Fraser's amendments to the Trade Particles Act. But he did nothing. He first said that the ACTU would fight these provisions. Then he explained that "fighting" meant that the ACTU would seek talks with the employers to discuss the Bill, because he hoped the employers would see the counter-productive nature of such legislation. He even said "there could be some aspects of the Bill which made sense..."

This was not fighting at all. It was class collaboration and sabotaging struggle once

again.

Militant workers were not as inclined as the capitalist media to praise Hawke as a great savior of the system. Repeatedly, as soon as there was struggle, Hawke rushed in to settle it. He breathed fire and brimstone against Fraser and Co. but always acted as a "reasonable" man, a "restraining influence". Reams and reams were written favourably about him in the daily press.

The attitude of fighters for the working class was perhaps best expressed in this parody of a well-known bush ballad:

The Mild Colonial Boy

There was a mild colonial boy, by the name of R.J.Hawke
You'd think that he was Jesus Christ to hear the bastard talk
He is the system's only hope, the bosses' pride and joy
The darling of the media is this Mild Colonial Boy

He's never faced election by the workers' rank and file
Yet every night on telly, we're condemned to watch his dial
He'll scowl and raise an eyebrow, 'tis nothing but a ploy
A useless bloody tamecat is the Mild Colonial Boy

He growls and drops expletives in a manner rather fierce
He's just about as radical as good old Eric Pierce.
He claims to be a socialist, he's not the real McCoy
A Labor opportunist is the Mild Colonial Boy

He loves to meet with Fraser, and they have such cosy chats
He's loaded with ambition and he wears too many hats
An action that is militant is certain to annoy
That gruff abrasive cream-puff called the Mild Colonial Boy

And if he gets to parliament, we know he'll never stop
Till he's the biggest windbag in that well-known talking shop
He'll shower them with bull-dust, for he's seldom ever coy
And that's the last we'll hear of him, the Mild Colonial Boy.

"Australia's best Labor Prime Minister" - Scott Morrison

But being bumped into Parliament in 1980 was not the last we were to hear of him. After only three years in the job, Hawke led Labor to victory in the 1983 election. He moved almost immediately to float the Australian dollar on the global currency market - the first in a long line of deregulations benefitting global finance speculators that he and his treasurer Paul Keating were to undertake.

Tony Abbott has been criticized for his observation that Hawke had a "Labor heart and a Liberal head". Indeed, he was half right. Hawke's head was "Liberal" and he out-Liberalled the conservatives by getting in first with a fully-fledged program of neo-liberal reforms.

He opened the banking sector to foreign competition and sold the state-owned Commonwealth Bank of Australia. He also removed controls on foreign exchange and Australian interest rates.

In 1989, he founded the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum to promote Australian and US monopoly growth in the region. Big business made sure through its membership of the Economic Planning and Advisory Council (an organization which was aimed to draw employers, Government and unions together) that it would have direct access to and domination over the Government.

Hawke also reduced all tariffs to 5 per cent and phased out protections for the textile, clothing and motor vehicle industries resulting in widespread job losses.

As ACTU leader Hawke had supported wage indexation as a means to freeze wages. In 1976 the

employers stepped up their offensive and imposed a wage cut by making indexation only partial. Hawke had rushed to defend what he called "full wage indexation". Despite his defence of it, wage indexation was increasingly rejected by the working class. In 1974-5, 65% of national income was received as wages and salaries. By 1977-79 it had fallen to 62% and by 1979-80 to 58%. ...In the three years ending June 30, 1981 consumer prices went up by about 33%. The increase in award wages was about 25% and

the increase in the legal minimum wage about 20%. As Prime Minister, Hawke looked for a replacement method of containing wages.

Hawke called an Economic Summit and came up with the Prices and Incomes Accord. Employers were not party to the Accord. Unions agreed to restrict wage demands and the government pledged to minimise inflation. Really the Accord and the Summit turned around one central issue – wage levels. The trade unions were keen to break out of the wage freeze of 1982 and get back to the system of regular indexed adjustments. They agreed to swap “guarantees of wage restraint” for increases in the “social wage” (tax reform, health insurance etc). Provision for a “catch-up” to make good the 1982 wage freeze were shelved. Hawke was determined that the Accord would achieve the ends he sought.

Sanctions were visited on those, like the Builders’ Labourers Federation, who tried to break out of this system. The Financial Review (Oct 15, 1984) contained this acute observation: “The Hawke government has become a jailer for unions which dare to break the Accord’s consensus, and the ACTU has become an industrial police force.” This was written after the Labor government had said it would legislate to deregister the Builders’ Labourers Federation, while the ACTU, still committed to the Hawke template, said it would disaffiliate that union and allow other unions to take the builders’ labourers members.

It would be remiss not to acknowledge some positive achievements of Hawke as Prime Minister. He did accept that certain battles, having been won on the ground – or in the rivers – should simply be accepted, that it was best for capitalism to move on whenever victories for the people were imminent. Hence, he passed legislation to allow the Franklin River to run free and banned new uranium mining at Jabiluka, on the western border of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, and gave world heritage listing to the Kakadu National Park.

By the same token, he was unable to deliver on his pledge that no child need live in poverty after 1990 – they still are, nor did he

deliver on his pledge (following receipt of the Barunga bark petition) to introduce a Treaty with First Nations – they still don’t have one. Yet he remains very popular. So long as the media puts his elation at the America’s Cup victory on high rotation, that popularity is guaranteed.

“Any boss who sacks anyone for not turning up today is a bum,” he famously declared. They never show his next sentence, “Of course, they’ll have to work harder the next day to make up”.

And whilst we will be forever reminded that Hawke encouraged us to take a day off work because of a victory in a rich man’s sport, let it not be forgotten that he sent us back to work after the little matter of the sacking of Gough Whitlam in a US-inspired constitutional coup. The very next day, he rejected union calls for a nation-wide strike and urged workers instead to donate a day’s pay to an ALP re-election campaign.

He was indeed an exemplary Labor lieutenant of capital.

Whitlam sacking - a tipping point in the relentless attack on workers' rights and living standards

Sunday, November 9, 2014

Much has been written about the legacy of the Whitlam Government since his passing away in October this year.

One feature of the Whitlam Government period that has not received much press is what was happening with workers' share (including self-employed workers) of the national income in the mid- 1970s and what has happened to it since.

A graph sourced by the ACTU in a 2013 document "A Shrinking Slice Of The Pie" shows that in the Whitlam Government period, workers' share of the national income rose from 63% in 1961 to 75% in 1975, the year of Whitlam's sacking.

By 2012 it had declined to below 60%. The steepest periods of decline in workers' share of the national income since the sacking of the Whitlam Government occurred in the Fraser Government's second term of office from 1977 to 1980, in the mid-1980s under the Accord policy of the Hawke Government and the period of Work Choices under the Howard Government.

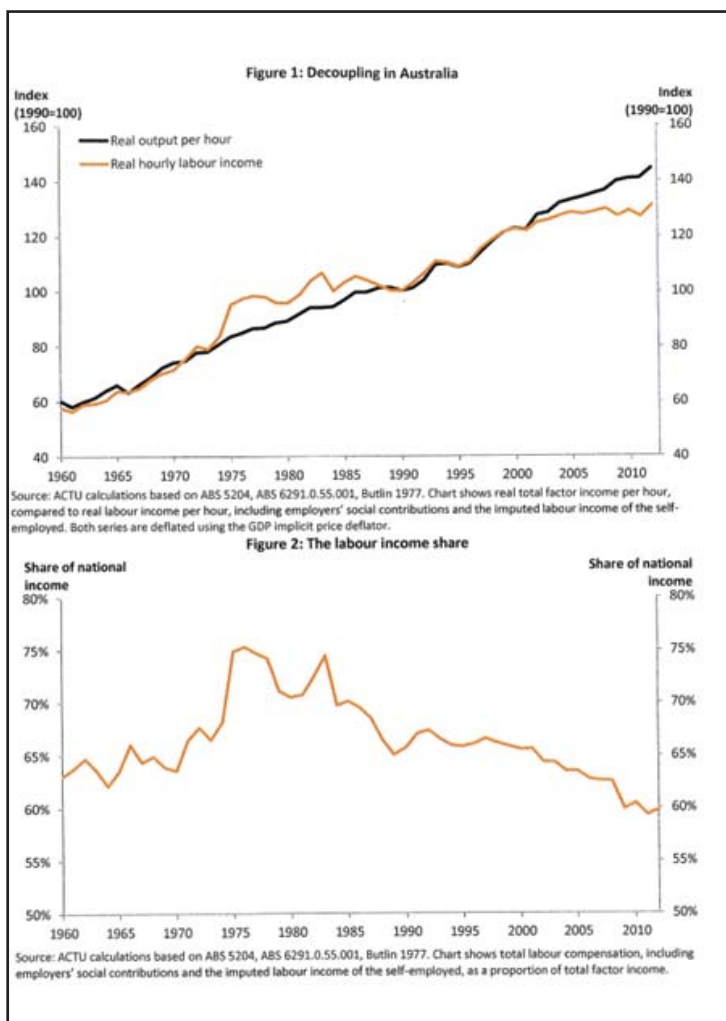
During the early to mid-1970's, there were consistently over 2,000,000 working days lost due to collective action in the form of strikes by workers. Many of these strikes were over claims for a bigger share of the pie created by workers but expropriated by the capitalist class.

Union membership which gave some indication of the numerical collective strength of the working class was just under 60% of the workforce.

The Whitlam sacking was a tipping point for workers in Australia. It symbolised a decision by US imperialism in particular that its global plans did not include toleration of an active, united working class in countries within its sphere of influence.

US imperialism intensified its efforts to court Labor 'leaders' like Hawke to control the working class (see "Further reading" below) and to participate in the systematic dismantling of the core strength of the working class in Australia. Its purpose was to maximise profits of the big corporations, especially in the mining, agriculture and resources sectors where imperialism significantly increased its presence from the 1980s onwards.

It had other plans for manufacturing workers in Australia. In a sense, imperialism gave up any hope of taming manufacturing workers in Australia. It resorted to closure of whole manufacturing industries in Australia,



with compliant governments, both Liberal and Labor, appealing to imperialism that they could carry out its wishes better than their parliamentary opponents.

The Accord policy of the 1980s, the introduction of non-union Enterprise Bargaining under Keating, the confinement of collective bargaining to the enterprise level, the narrow definition of workers' right to 'protected industrial action' not only paved the way for the individual contracts of Howard's Work Choices, but they turned workers away from being union members in their droves.

From a high of just below 60% in the 1970s, union membership has fallen to about 18% overall and 13% in the private sector. Strikes are a rare event in Australia now.

Renewed Assault On Workers' Living Standards To Increase Profits.

However, imperialism is not satisfied. Through its latest parliamentary agent, the Abbott Government, it is trying to wipe out workers' mass organisations (unions) altogether through legal means combined with a sustained media campaign portraying unions as corrupt organisations that workers should avoid at all costs.

The Government is also planning to pass laws which further restrict the rights of workers to discuss issues with union officials inside their workplace. The Government wants to restore the right of the boss to prevent a union official from meeting workers in the place where they have their meal break. This builds on the lack of rights of workers' elected workplace delegates in the Fair Work Act where the word 'shop steward' or 'union delegate' does not even rate a mention!

The Government, on behalf of the big corporations, is also hoping to legislate to further restrict when workers can take the already limited 'protected industrial action'.

The purpose of this latest attack is to prepare the way for a further reduction in the workers' share of the wealth of the country and to further increase the profit share of the corporations, including those that dodge their tax obligations and those that do not.

Workers Fighting Back

Despite the incredible assault on workers since the sacking of the Whitlam Government by imperialism and the in the main servile parliamentary friends, workers continue to find ways to act collectively to defend and extend their interests. Although the number of workers in unions has declined as a percentage of the workforce, there are still thousands of workers who join unions. However there is also much higher turnover of workers in particular workplaces and industries now than in the 1970s when there were more full-time jobs and more job security. Despite restrictive collective bargaining rights under the Fair Work Act, thousands of workers still stick together to win above award minimum pay rises and better working conditions.

One of the problems is that union membership does not 'follow' workers who are moving from one employer to another or one industry to another, so a worker who is a member of a collective today is 'lost' when they move to another workplace tomorrow.

How workers communicate with each other to plan collective action has changed, but not been extinguished by the big corporations and their governments. While the corporations benefit by not having to rely on as many large concentrations of workers as was the case with big manufacturing plants of the past, they struggle to control how young workers in particular use social media to communicate with each other and to plan actions.

The recent Bust The Budget rallies, while not sustained, were organised almost entirely by social media and resulted in good numbers. They showed that the corporations may have short term success in restricting action inside workplaces due to repressive laws and the changed nature of many workplaces, workers still and always will find ways to organise collectively to pursue their own interests.

Unions as organisations can still greatly assist in this process by themselves putting their common interests ahead of their own sectional interests.

Workers have no time for demarcation disputes which cause confusion among workers about

which union to join. Most workers who have joined a union at one point or another in their working life would appreciate a membership system where their union membership can easily be maintained as they move in and out of different jobs, or temporarily cease working.

Workers want organisations to belong to that are in step with how they earn a living in the 21st Century.

Labor since Whitlam

Nick G

For many years, Australian Communists were in disagreement about the nature of the Labor Party. Was it a workers' party, a capitalist party, or a mixture of both – a two-class party?

When a split occurred in the original Communist Party in 1963-4, those who established our Party agreed that it was essentially a party of capitalism because (1) its demands accepted the social system of capitalism, and (2) its method of achieving them accepted the social institution of capitalism – parliament.

The capitalist class is not a monolithic bloc. In our country, the most powerful sections have always been those tied to imperialist finance capital. The conservative parties have always been their self-proclaimed mouthpiece. The smaller local capitalists and the working and intermediate classes tried to encourage Labor to be their mouthpiece. The Scullin, Curtin, Chifley and Whitlam governments did enact reforms, and did pursue economic policies, that did not challenge capitalism but did strive to win more for workers and local capitalists from the big overseas sources of capital in Australia. Whitlam pushed this to the limit of what foreign capital could tolerate, challenging the US stranglehold not only on the economy, but politically and culturally as well. It ended with the US-CIA/UK engineered coup that saw him and the Labor government sacked and replaced by the conservative pro-imperialist Liberal party and its leader Malcolm Fraser.

In what follows, we will briefly review the

federal Labor governments that have come after Whitlam. We will not, for the moment, look at the experience of State and Territory Labor governments that have their own histories of the administration of capitalism and of service to imperialism.

Nor will we look in detail at the extra-parliamentary service of former Labor politicians to capitalism and imperialism. Suffice it to say that examples abound, from former Queensland Labor Premier Anna Bligh's appointment as CEO of the Australian Banking Association (2017-2025); former Minister for Resources and Energy Martin Ferguson's appointment as chairman of the advisory board of APPEA (Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association) and director of Kerry Stokes' Seven Group Holdings; Gary Gray who worked for WA-based Mineral Resources, and then as a Director of Woodside Petroleum during its theft of East Timorese resources becoming Minister for Resources and Energy under both Gillard and Rudd, a move enthusiastically welcome by the mining sector; former Treasurer Wayne Swan's work as Chair of sand miner Diatrema Resources and as a Director of Queensland's coal-fired power station operator, Stanwell Corporation and former leader of the ALP, Kim Beazley, became Director and Board Member of Lockheed Martin-Australia.

Our study begins with the Hawke Government (1983-1991). Hawke was ACTU President between 1969 and 1980, before entering parliament in 1980. He was an outspoken supporter of Zionist Israel and a close friend and frequent visitor to the US Embassy from late 1960s. He provided the US with details

surrounding labour disputes, especially those relating to American companies and individuals, such as union disputes with Ford Motor Company. Hawke was described by US diplomats as “a bulwark against anti-American sentiment and resurgent communism during the economic turmoil of the 1970s”.

Hawke and his successor Paul Keating stole a march on the conservatives by pioneering the introduction of neo-liberal economic policies, compelled by capital’s needs to expand and driven by imperialist globalisation. He floated the Australian dollar, allowing the US-dominated international money market to set the exchange rate, and opening the Australian economy to deregulated global competition. His government allowed the operation of foreign-owned banks, selling the state-owned Commonwealth Bank of Australia, removing controls Australian interest rates and opening Australia to competition in the telecommunications industry.

Hawke drew on his time as head of the Australian Council of Trade Unions to ensure the success of the Accord which put a halt to wage increases and took industrial agency away from unions, as well as introducing enterprise bargaining, which further weakened workers’ collective power in their workplaces and industries. The Accord’s impact on workers’ standard of living and attempts to dampen workers’ struggles paved the way for the Dollar Sweets and Mudginberri attacks on workers, isolating them. In 1986, the Hawke government passed a bill to de-register the Builders Labourers Federation federally due to the union not following the Accord agreements. Hawke also used the Air Force as scab pilots to break the Ansett pilot’s strike, which included massive fines on the Pilot’s Federation.

The Industrial Relations Commission in the 1980s under Hawke stripped back provisions giving some protection for Union Delegates who were able to use those limited protections to fight for their jobs when sacked.

Shortly after the 1990 election, Hawke would lead Australia into its first overseas military campaign since the Vietnam War, forming a close alliance with US President George H. W.

Bush to join the coalition in the Gulf War.

In 1988, as part of Bicentennial celebrations, Hawke visited the site of the NT Barunga Festival where he was presented with a petition from Galarrwuy Yunupingu and Wenten Rubuntja calling for Aboriginal self-determination and a Treaty. Hawke publicly declared that this would be achieved by 1991, but it never was and remains an issue to be resolved.

On the positive side, the enormous strength of people’s movements forced Hawke to veto the construction of the Franklin Dam in Tasmania, to ban new uranium mining at Jabiluka in the NT, and enacted the Sex Discrimination Act.

Hawke was in turn replaced as Prime Minister by his Treasurer, Paul Keating who went on to win the 1993 election. Keating continued the deregulations and privatisations he and Hawke had introduced. The Commonwealth Bank had been privatised eight days before Keating booted out Hawke, and it was followed by privatisations of Qantas and the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories.

Keating further deregulated the banking system (allowing numerous foreign-owned banks to begin operating in Australia for the first time) and granted autonomy on decision-making to the Reserve Bank of Australia. Hawke and Keating Labor governments opened the door to foreign capital and wholesale privatisation of state instrumentalities, hospitals, child care, aged care, public transport, energy and power, welcoming imperialist domination.

In 1987, the ACTU released its Australia Reconstructed policy which complemented the destruction of manufacturing industries in Australia as multinationals moved production overseas mainly. Australia Reconstructed followed the US-led imperialist globalisation sweeping the world. This trend was also facilitated by ALP’s deregulation of the financial system, privatization and outsourcing of so-called “non-core” business and reduction in tariffs as the multinationals who moved production offshore no longer needed protection of tariffs for their now destroyed Australian based operations.

Award Restructuring promoted by Labor saw wage increases based on so-called multi-skilling (one worker doing the work of two) resulting in less jobs, increased workloads and intensified exploitation of workers.

Enterprise bargaining begun under Hawke, at first meant that agreements could only be negotiated with unions. Then Keating in 1993 had the Industrial Relations Act changed to make it legal for employers to do enterprise agreements with their own workforce without union involvement and ending industry wide agreements. The result of all this was isolation of workers from each other in a particular industry and even more isolation from workers across all industries. It was an attack on working class solidarity as a whole. Keating promoted APEC as a regional body, but ensured US membership and participation through US President Clinton. He also promoted the unfair Timor Sea Treaty at the expense of East Timor. During the Keating government, mandatory detention for asylum seekers was also introduced for the first time. Keating's Redfern Speech in 1992 was a landmark development in the recognition of First Peoples and their history of struggle against dispossession.

The conservatives won the 1996 election and held office until Kevin Rudd's election in 2007. The re-election of ALP in 2007 on the backs of workers' Your Rights At Work: Worth Fighting For campaign which defeated the Howard Government only resulted in "Work Choices Lite", in the form of the Fair Work Act 2009, called by workers "UnFair Work Act" or "Lipstick on a Pig" This was the first time that the federal Industrial Act specifically made strike action illegal except during a bargaining period for an enterprise agreement provided workers jumped through all the restrictive hoops of "protected industrial action".

Rudd continued Labor support for neo-liberal economic policy with one qualification, namely, that if the "free market" failed, governments should intervene. This was tested in the 2008 Great Financial Crisis when government funds were released for significant infrastructure projects that ameliorated the worst of the crisis.

Rudd also signed the Kyoto Protocols on

global warming, and offered an apology to the Stolen Generation.

However, he was committed to the US and, despite concerns about the reasons for the US invasion of Iraq, kept Australian combat forces there until July 2009. He also supported Australian military involvement in Afghanistan.

Rudd maintained the conservative's unjust attacks on construction workers and their unions, refusing to disband the Australian Building and Construction Commission. He retained the illegality of secondary boycotts, the right of employers to lock workers out, restriction of a union right of entry to workplaces, and restrictions on workers' right to strike.

Although Rudd abolished the conservatives' Australian Workplace Awards, they were replaced by the Fair Work Commission which placed new restrictions on workers and their unions.

Rudd meekly floated his idea of establishing a government owned bank operated through corporatised, but still government run Australia Post. However, he quickly withdrew his idea under pressure from the 4 furious foreign owned banks – CBA, Westpac, National Australia Bank and ANZ.

When Rudd tried to introduce a 40% super profits tax on mining companies, the Minerals Council of Australia, big mining companies, Business Council of Australia and Murdoch media launched a strong attack on the government, and something of a political crisis developed. As a direct consequence of this, his deputy, Julia Gillard, heavily promoted by the Murdoch media, challenged him for the leadership and, after winning in June 2010, declared that the "door had been opened to the mining companies". The proposed Resources Super Profits Tax was cancelled.

As Minister for Education, Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations under Rudd, Gillard had attacked unions, declaring in the case of striking WA FIFO workers that their strike was illegal and that unless they returned to work, they would be met with

the "full force of the law". She also sought to break Australian Education Union refusal to implement the NAPLAN tests, threatening to "rouse parents" up against the teachers, and when asked to comment on rumoured use of backpackers as NAPLAN strike-breakers, said she would "rule nothing in and nothing out". In her role as Minister for Education, Gillard travelled to Washington, D.C., in 2009, where she signed a deal with US Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to encourage improved policy collaboration in education reform between both countries. This resulted in failed US policies being introduced to Australia, including the ranking of schools in "league tables", deprofessionalising teacher standards through US-adapted schemes like Teach for Australia, and a strengthening of the position of private schooling.

In a 2008 speech in Washington, Gillard endorsed the ANZUS Alliance and described the United States as a civilising global influence.

On her first day as prime minister, Gillard reassured US president Barack Obama of Australia's continuing support for the military campaign in Afghanistan, which was then in its ninth year of operation. In 2011, following the imposition of a NATO "no-fly" zone over Libya, she endorsed the military action which resulted in the murder of Gaddafi. On 9 March 2011, Gillard travelled to the United States to mark the 60th Anniversary of the ANZUS Alliance, telling Congress that the United States has "a true friend down under". It was a grovelling, sycophantic display of loyalty to the US.

On her own website, Gillard proudly boasts that "In foreign policy, Ms Gillard strengthened Australia's alliance with the United States..." It therefore was no surprise when, on 16 November, 2011, standing in the Australian parliament next to fawning Australian PM Julie Gillard, Obama announced to the world the US Pivot into Asia-Pacific. This was a major shift in US global military policy which would relocate 60% of US military stationed around the world to Asia Pacific, turning Australia into a major US military base in the region. China's economic growth and influence was challenging the US dominance, making it the main target of the US Pivot into Asia-Pacific. Standing beside Obama, the obsequious

Gillard, proudly announced the permanent presence of 2,500 rotational US marines based in Darwin, pledging Australia's total commitment to US imperialism and its US bases on this land and country.

In October 2013, on the same day of her famous Misogyny speech in Parliament, Gillard cut the Single Parent Pension, leaving many single parent women \$60 - \$100 a week worse off.

Gillard did introduce the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and commissioned David Gonski to make recommendations on schools funding, but she had become increasingly unpopular and lost a leadership challenge, and the Prime Ministership, to Kevin Rudd. He kept the position for three months before losing an election to the conservatives under Tony Abbott.

Despite Rudd and Gillard's promises to abolish the ABCC, it continued to operate under both their governments. Gillard regularly threatened construction workers and their unions with her government's "tough cop" actions if workers dared to disrupt the profit making by big developers and foreign investors.

Labor was not in office again until it won the 10 April 2022 election. As a sign of what was to come, the new PM, Anthony Albanese, took less than 24 hours to pledge Labor support for the AUKUS arrangements. His decision was not referred to Cabinet, nor to parliament. The Albanese government's lead triumvirate of Albanese, Marles and Wong is deeply pro-US imperialism. Their indifference to Australian independence, and passionate embrace of US overlordship is seen in their unquestioning acceptance of the Force Posture Agreement (FPA) between Australia and the United States, entered into by PM Tony Abbott on 12 August 2014. The FPA cedes Australian territory to the US for its military needs, and ties the Australian Defence Forces to US control via "interoperability".

Albanese government's subservience to US imperialism is seen in its rubber stamping almost every US policy in the United Nations, supporting and assisting the US and Zionist Israel in their continuing Palestinian genocide

and colonial occupations. It was only after nearly 2 years of immense people's struggles and pressure, nationally and internationally, that forced the Albanese government to declare its support for a separate Palestinian state.

Many rank and file Labor Party members still hold out hope that a Whitlam-style Labor Party can be revived. There are groups working at the Labor grass roots trying to shift Labor to the progressive "left" of the Whitlam era.. This will certainly be resisted by the dominant parliamentary wing of the Labor Party and their masters in the US embassy. In September 2025, Albanese told Murdoch's Weekend Australian "We have an ideology, but it is one in which there is a great deal of consensus across the Labor Party that people don't go into a room with the left hat or the right hat on. People go in with the Labor hat." The "one hat" theory of ideology arises from the need of US imperialism to maintain Australia within its sphere of influence, tightly enmeshed in a web of economic, political, diplomatic, cultural and military domination. It says that any voices questioning that relationship will not be coming from under the "Labor hat".

Albanese went on to say that he wanted Labor to be the "natural party of government" of Australia.

Government for whom?

Albanese said he leads a "progressive centre left government that doesn't try to do everything immediately", one "with good relations with the business community, the union movement, civil society groups".

By the "union movement" he means the likes of the ACTU and the Administrator of the CFMEU. None of this is betrayal, rather it is spelling out the ALP in its natural role as a party of capitalism which naturally enough wants to administer capitalism for the dominant US and other multinational corporations.

Labor since Whitlam has made itself acceptable to the US overlords, has made its loyalty to the US the cornerstone of Labor policy, because it has learnt the lesson of the Whitlam dismissal - do not challenge US

control of Australia.

The main lessons from 11 November 1975 Whitlam government US-CIA/UK coup, and all Labor governments since then, is that the dominant imperialist power over Australia (the core of capitalism) will not allow a progressive government to take even tentative steps towards real independence that threaten its profiteering and economic, military and political domination. It is much more so today than in 1975.

Social democracy will always uphold and protect the interests of the dominant section of capitalist ruling class.

That challenge must come from the people, and particularly from the working class.

A movement for genuine anti-imperialist independence and socialism is growing and expanding, but it still has a long way to go before it can successfully mount the challenge that will not come from Labor.

However, it will come.
Nothing is surer.



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